

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 0546

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TAGS: PINT, PFOR, AU, YU

SUBJECT: AUSTRO-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS CONTINUE TO IMPROVE

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: AUSTRO-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS ARE IMPROVING AT A FAST PACE AND ARE NOW EXPECTED TO EXPAND BEYOND LEVEL OBTAINING PRIOR TO MOST RECENT CONTROVERSY OVER SLOVENIAN MINORITY ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

2. KREISKY'S SURPRISE VISIT TO YUGOSLAVIA IN LATE DECEMBER HAS GIVEN IMPETUS TO MOVE BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO RENORMALIZE BILATERAL RELATIONS. ACCORDING TO MFA SOURCE, DISCUSSIONS OVER LONG-STANDING RETURN-OF-ARCHIVES CONTROVERSY ARE PROCEEDING SATISFACTORILY AND FORWARD MOVEMENT IS ALSO TAKING PLACE ON ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL FRONTS.

3. AS PART OF WHAT APPEARS TO BE PLANNED CONSCIOUS EFFORT BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO GO BEYOND RENORMALIZATION AND TO IN FACT EXPAND BILATERAL RELATIONS, GOY OFFICIAL DELEGATION, HEADED BY VICE FOREIGN MINISTER, IS EXPECTED IN AUSTRIAN CAPITAL AROUND MID-FEBRUARY FOR TALKS COVERING BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL INTERESTS AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, TO PREPARE FOR KREISKY STATE VISIT TO YUGOSLAVIA LATER THIS YEAR, PROBABLY AT END OF MARCH OR EARLY APRIL. ANOTHER HARBINGER OF KREISKY'S DETERMINATION TO PUT AUSTRO-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS ON CONFIDENTIAL

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MORE SOLID BASIS IS PROBABLE FIRST-TIME INVITATION TO

YUGOSLAV SOCIALIST ALLIANCE TO SEND OBSERVER TO AUSTRIAN SOCIALIST PARTY CONGRESS WHICH SCHEDULED VIENNA MID-MARCH. INVITATION COULD GENERATE SOME DOMESTIC CONTROVERSY BUT KREISKY CAN BE EXPECTED TO CITE IN HIS DEFENSE EXAMPLE OF WEST GERMAN SOCIALISTS LEADERS, WHO INVITED ALLIANCE OBSERVER TO THEIR RECENT MANNHEIM CONGRESS BUT WHO COULD HARDLY BE DESCRIBED AS SUPPORTERS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNIST PARTIES. YUGOSLAVIA, FOR ITS PART, IS SCHEDULED TO HAVE ITS MINISTERS FOR FOREIGN TRADE, TRANSPORT AND AGRICULTURE VISIT THEIR AUSTRIAN COUNTERPARTS DURING FIRST HALF OF 1976, ACCORDING TO YUGOSLAV EMBASSY SOURCE.

4. AS FOR SLOVENE MINORITY ISSUE, YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR HAS TOLD US THAT KREISKY-TITO MEETING RESULTED IN RESTATEMENT IN CONCILIATORY LANGUAGE OF RESPECTIVE VIEWS ON ISSUE AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, ACCORDING TO SAME SOURCE, IN EXPRESSION OF POLITICAL WILL BY KREISKY TO DISCUSS ISSUE AGAIN WITH ALL POLITICAL PARTIES IN AUSTRIAN PARLIAMENT IN EFFORT TO SECURE SOLUTION OF ISSUE ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH AUSTRO-GERMAN AND AUSTRO-SLOVENE ETHNIC GROUPS. IT SHOULD BE NOTED HOWEVER, THAT GOA PUBLIC POSITION ON ISSUE REMAINS UNCHANGED AND DRAFTING ON SPECIAL CENSUS BILL CONTINUES.

5. AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT SOURCES OBVIOUSLY WELCOME WHAT THEY FEEL TO BE BASIC DECISION BY GOY TO STAND DOWN ON SLOVENIAN MINORITY ISSUE AND TO PUT MORE IMPORTANT YUGOSLAV NATIONAL INTERESTS AHEAD OF NARROWER SLOVENIAN ONES. YUGOSLAV EFFORT TOWARD AUSTRIA IS THEREFORE SEEN AS LOGICAL SEQUENCE TO YUGOSLAV-ITALIAN SETTLEMENT AND PART OF BROADER SCENARIO OF ESTABLISHING, FOR MULTITUDE OF REASONS, LARGER OPENING TOWARD WEST. FROM YUGOSLAV VANTAGE KREISKY, AS INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL PERSONALITY OF SOME STANDING, COULD BE VERY HELPFUL IN THIS REGARD. BUCHANAN

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